Workers lose 29 million days each year to hay fever

9 June 2016 - Severe hay fever costs the UK 29 million days of work each year, according to a new survey from the Met Office.

The research found that more than one in ten (11%) UK adults of working age suffer from hay fever to the extent that it stop them going into work, causing them to miss an average of 8.4 working days per year.

In total, the Met Office survey found 41 per cent of UK adults of working age say they suffer from hay fever to some extent. Amongst this group, 11.2 working days a year are impacted by it, with respondents estimating their productivity drops by an average of 26%.

The research has been released to mark the launch of the Met Office's new mobile weather app - the most accurate and reliable source of weather forecast information. Available on iOS and Android, the new app includes forecasts for hay fever sufferers including accurate pollen counts for up to five days ahead and daily push notifications if the count is set to be moderate or above.

The research also found that 34% of UK adults say that they have become ill due to not preparing for the weather - for example not packing sun cream during hot weather. Amongst these, 23% were forced to miss an average of 3.7 days of work.

Derrick Ryall, is Head of the Public Weather Service at the Met Office. He said: "Hay fever can be crippling for those who suffer from it - much more than just a sniffly nose - and it is often overlooked as a factor which prevents people being able to go to work."

As well as pollen and air pollution forecasts for UK locations, users of the app can also subscribe to pollen alerts, which send users a push notification at 7am if the pollen in their region that day is going to be moderate or above.

Derrick Ryall added: "So whilst we can't control the pollen count, those who suffer with severe hay fever can find out what the day and week ahead holds for them, allowing them to plan accordingly - be that working from home or taking preventative medication - to help put them back in control."

Get the latest pollen forecast and pollen push notifications for your area from our new weather app.

For iPhone the app is available from the App store .

For Android the app is available from Google Play Store .

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